Dulcy Scripter

Professor Wendt

Eng 201

15 February 2016

Language has always been and always will be such a major part of our lives. There isn’t a day that goes by where language can be ignored; it is a part of everyday life. Language plays a role in how and what we say in a tweet, what words we choose to express ourselves on Facebook, and even what part of language we choose to permanently ink onto our bodies. Aspects of language affect things like the media, our cultural ways, how we communicate, and most importantly gender. We see language in movies, on the radio, how we speak, like southern accent or how we say things, and depending on who we are talking to our form of language is different.

Gender roles have become a huge problem in society. For those feminists out there working hard to eliminate gender roles in order for women to be seen as equal workers and basically just equal in all aspects of life. Language can reinforce gender roles for examples the author Maeve Conrick (1995) said “Be quiet! Didn’t your husband teach you not to interrupt when a man is talking,” (pg.1). Basically stating that women should never interrupt a man, not because interrupting is rude but because a man is superior and its completely wrong for a woman to talk to a man without being talked to first. The gender role being that women are beneath men and are in no ways equal to men. While times have changed and language has as well and you will see more women lawyers and doctors, there is still a glass ceiling for women that is impenetrable and women can only be paid so much but always less than men.

Languages around the world and in other cultures have gender neutral pronouns. For example in German er is masculine which is the English equivalent of he, sie is she, and es is neutral. There has been efforts made by the transgender community that doesn’t identify with either gender to go by gender neutral pronouns such as “they, them, their”. Not having a word where non gender conforming individuals can use to express themselves severely restricts them.

Language has also created a phenomenon that has gone on for years. That phenomenon being using certain language and a way of speaking to make fun of and even insult genders. For example when a boy is playing baseball and throws the ball and it was a terrible throw, the coach says that the player just threw “like a girl.” Coming from me, a person who loves baseball and plays all the time, which just isn’t true. I don’t understand how throwing like a girl can be a bad thing, I am a girl so of course I throw like a girl. And while I am kicking ass in a game if someone wants to say that I throw “like a girl,” well then go for it, because it means I am winning. My dad says to me all the time when we are rough housing that I punch “like a girl” and I don’t let it bother me because I am a girl and I know it hurt, or at least I like to think it did. “Like a girl” is not an insult to me and nor should it be for any girl or guy.

TO BE CONTINUED….